

Farmington Public Schools
Work Group on Upper Elementary School Implementation

The Task

To review the upper elementary (grades 5/6) teaching philosophy, to analyze the implementation of the schedule in terms of what's working and what needs work. The group will make recommendations to Instructional Leaders (Cost, Gekiere, Harmala, Khalil, Manier, Wilson, Vercillino) on how to move forward.

Background

As part of an effort to align district resources while maintaining high levels of student achievement, Farmington Public Schools were reconfigured into four levels: elementary (K – grade 4), upper elementary (grades 5-6), middle schools (grades 7-8) and high school (grades 9-12). In the spring of 2010, representatives met to establish a district philosophy and vision for upper elementary education at FPS. In the fall of 2010, student, parents and staff were assigned to two upper elementary buildings.

Work Group Members

Up to thirty individuals will volunteer to participate. The work group will consist of the following members:

- Representative 5th grade core teachers from both upper elementary schools
- Representative 6th grade core teachers from both upper elementary schools
- Representative specials teachers from each upper elementary school
- Representative special education teachers or personnel from both upper elementary schools
- An upper elementary counselor
- An administrative representative from each upper elementary school
- A secretarial or support staff from each upper elementary school
- A math coordinator working in either of the upper elementary schools
- Two ELA coordinators/interventionists working in either of the upper elementary schools
- Two elementary teachers from feeder schools to both upper elementaries
- Two middle school teachers from receiving schools of both upper elementaries

Jon Mainer and Mark Wilson will serve as ex-officio representative to the work group. The work group will be facilitated externally.

Procedure

Five meetings will be held to address this issue. Meeting one will focus on forming the group, reviewing the charge to the work group and outlining the tasks for the work group. Meetings two and three will focus on gathering information on the current state and identifying what works and what needs work. Meetings four and five will focus on analysis of this information and development of consensus on recommendations with regard to how to move (what) forward. A sixth meeting is listed in case of meeting cancellation.

Meeting dates and times are as follows:

Meeting #1	January 14, 2011	8 – 11 a.m.	MTC
Meeting #2	January 28, 2011	1 – 4:30 p.m.	MTC

Meeting #3 February 11, 2011	8 – 11 a.m.	MTC
Meeting #4 March 3, 2011	1 – 4:30 p.m.	MTC
Meeting #5 March 16, 2011	1 – 4:30 p.m.	MTC
Meeting #6 April 15 th , 2011	1 – 4:30 p.m.	MTC

Key Questions

1. What is the intent and purpose of the upper elementary schools in Farmington? What was our teaching philosophy? Our teaching beliefs and values for our schools?
2. How have we put that teaching philosophy into practice? How are we manifesting our beliefs and values about upper elementary schools? What's working?
3. Knowing what we know now, what do we wish we were doing to put our teaching philosophy into practice? To manifest our beliefs and values?
4. What differences do we see between what we envisioned and our current practices? What impact do we see those differences having?
5. What similarities do we see between what we envisioned and our current teaching practices? What impact do we see those similarities having?
6. What strategies or teaching practices might we employ to move this initiative forward? What might we do to capitalize on what's working and address what we wish we were doing? How do those strategies and practices align with our vision and beliefs?
7. What's the gap between current teaching practice and what we need to do to move us forward? Why is closing the gap important?
8. Given what we want to accomplish, what do we need to do to close this gap? For whom? What differences will it make if we take these steps?
9. What are the desired teaching outcomes in closing the gap? What would be different in our upper elementary schools if the gap were narrowed? How would we know it was different?
10. How would a process to engage the key stakeholders in this work look? Particularly, parents?
11. How do we communicate our progress to all stakeholders?